United Nations A/53/270

General Assembly

Distr.: General
19 August 1998
English
Original: French

**Fifty-third session**
Item 20 (b) of the provisional agenda*
**Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: special economic assistance to individual countries or regions**

## Letter dated 17 August 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw to your attention the statement by the Presidency of the European Union on the Sudan, issued on 14 August 1998.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Ernst **Sucharipa**
Permanent Representative of
Austria to the United Nations

* A/53/150.

98-24347 (E) 200898 200898

# Annex

## Statement on the Sudan issued on 14 August 1998 by the Presidency of the European Union

The European Union welcomes the latest round of negotiations between the Government of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, which were held in Addis Ababa from 4 to 7 August 1998 in the framework of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the agreement of the parties to convene a fourth round of negotiations within six months in Nairobi. The European Union nevertheless notes with regret that the Government of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement were not able, at this stage, to reach an agreement on major questions of contention, such as the geographical definition of the area to be subject to a referendum. The European Union underlines the importance of the mechanism of shuttle diplomacy as a means of narrowing the gap between the parties on outstanding issues and recommends its continuation.

The European Union remains very concerned at the current humanitarian tragedy of the populations in southern Sudan. In order to allow full access to those in dire need of assistance, the European Union, recalling its declaration of 1 May 1998, welcomes the three months' ceasefire in Bahr al-Ghazal, which has been agreed upon by the Government of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, and the declaration of a unilateral ceasefire issued by the Government of the Sudan on 4 August 1998. The European Union urges both parties to extend the ceasefire geographically and beyond the above-mentioned time period. This should be done for humanitarian purposes and as a confidence-building measure. The European Union emphasizes that food aid will be required for at least another year.

The European Union calls on all parties involved to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance to those in need, to provide, where requested, international humanitarian relief agencies with all possible assistance and to ensure full respect for international humanitarian law. The Union further calls on all parties to respect and guarantee the security of all personnel of the aid organizations and relief flights and their crews and other means of humanitarian transport and supply depots. It encourages the parties to work with the Technical Committee on Humanitarian Assistance in this regard, and calls on them to facilitate, as agreed and without further delay, the implementation of the United Nations humanitarian needs assessment mission in the Nuba mountain region.

The European Union reiterates its full support for the Intergovernmental Authority on Development peace negotiations, as well as for the role of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development Partners Forum, and in so doing it urges the negotiating parties to agree to hold their next round of peace talks in Nairobi at an early date.

The Central and Eastern European countries and Cyprus associated with the European Union and the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area align themselves with the present statement.